



**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

**“AMERICA IN THE WORLD: FORGING A NEW VISION  
FOR FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY.”**

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY:**

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**RICHARD C. LEONE, PRESIDENT, THE CENTURY  
FOUNDATION**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**

**MADELEINE ALBRIGHT,  
FORMER U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE;  
PRINCIPAL, THE ALBRIGHT GROUP**

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MR. SPENCER BOYER: Could you all please take your seats? Thank you. We're about to get started. Please take your seats.

Good morning. Thank you all for coming here today. My name is Spencer Boyer and I'm with the Center for American Progress. We're delighted to have you here today for "America in the World: A New Vision for Foreign Policy and International Security," a conference cosponsored by the Center for American Progress and the Century Foundation.

To begin our program today, I'd like to welcome to the stage the president of the Center for American Progress, John Podesta.

(Applause.)

MR. JOHN PODESTA: Good morning and thank you again for joining us, and thank you, Spencer, for all that you've done to pull this together. I'd like to thank you for participating in today's conference. I also really want to call out and thank the Century Foundation, who are our cosponsors with this event. This is the culmination of four years of collaboration on security policy and foreign policy with the Century Foundation.

The Center for American Progress actually launched with the conference about three and a half years ago that Dick and I cosponsored, and it's been a great collaboration ever since. I also want to extend a special thanks to all of those who have spent countless time organizing today's event, Spencer Boyer in particular, but Mort Halperin, Joe Cirincione, Jeff Laurenti, as well as the staff of both organizations involved in putting together today's event.

I think to understand why we're here today all you have to do is actually pick up the newspaper. We see the records in Iraq, stories of our ground forces near the breaking point, an energy policy that is bad for our security, our economy and our environment, increasing fragmentation in the world, our adversary strengthened. In the wake of what I view as disastrous foreign policies over the last six and a half years, we're here today to help forge a new vision for foreign policy and international security. The Bush administration has let our country down in my view, again, a very dangerous path. The result of the administration's "go at it alone" strategy has left our standing in the world at perhaps its lowest point since World War II. And here at home, recent polls have delivered the public's verdict on the neoconservative experiment, rendering the Bush administration less popular than the Nixon administration just before his resignation.

The challenge before us then is to chart a new, more effective course – a course that ensures the protection of American interests, strengthens American security, and uses all of our country's awesome powers to bring the world together, not to tear it apart. At today's conference we'll hear from a wide variety of distinguished experts, each of whom will help us confront some of the most pressing challenges we face when crafting a new, more effective foreign policy course for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Our first panel will tackle the intertwined issues of energy and the environment. The president has recently committed to setting at least a vague goal of cutting carbon emissions, but his actions, I think, over the past six years have spoken much louder than the latest attempt to frankly change the subject. Withdrawing from the Kyoto Treaty and until recently refusing to admit that global warming even existed, President Bush I think has wasted invaluable time in combating climate change and exerting U.S. leadership to rally the world behind the cause.

In the meantime, global warming is exacerbating threats such as the spread of disease, coastal flooding, and I think the impact on vulnerable populations in particular will begin soon to increase demands on U.S. military forces and certainly on U.S. diplomacy. We need to adopt a new course and quickly along with international partners to fight this imminent threat. Today's panel will explore some of the ways we can best do that.

Our second panel will focus on the U.S. role in the Middle East. Iraq is not the only challenge to U.S. policy in the region. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to rage, and violence extends north into Lebanon, Iran is defying the international community in its pursuit of nuclear capabilities, and the refugee stream from Iraq is increasingly destabilizing the region. At the center of many of these problems lies Iraq and the more than 150,000 U.S. caught in the middle of a civil war there. Today's panelists will assess the U.S. role in the region so critical to U.S. interests.

Our third panel will address the need to reconfigure America's defenses for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The strain the war in Iraq has placed on America's all-volunteer Army and National Guard is sapping our ability to prepare for and face new threats to national security. As we rebuild our ground force, we must also recognize shifting strategic realities. More troops are currently needed for the fight against al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, and to help bolster that nation's fledgling democracy. Long-term planning and force structure, research and development, and base posture must recognize and reflect the challenges that face the military of today and that will face the world of tomorrow. Our panelists will discuss how to best reconfigure our forces to most effectively deal with those new threats.

Our final panel today will discuss America in the global economy. The United States is confronted with a new age in the global economy, and as China and India's GDP rapidly expands, American workers are faced with an increasingly challenging work environment that is more international and fluid than ever. Offshoring and outsourcing have become buzzwords with particular sting in the job market. Meanwhile, new advances in technology on everything from clean energy sources to communications are revolutionizing markets and the way we live. The mere mention of China's economy evokes either hope or fear of the global impact, depending on where you're sitting probably, of the world's fastest growing major economy.

In the face of all these challenges, how do we ensure that the U.S. economy remains innovative and competitive? Today's panel will explore some of these issues

and discuss how the United States can embrace these challenges and strengthen its economy, all while addressing problems of global warming and poverty.

I've highlighted the panel discussions, but we obviously have a roster of terrific keynote speakers beginning with Secretary Albright, and including two national security advisers and a senator who's just recently returned from discussions about Iran. So today's speakers and panelists will address these pressing questions, help us to begin a dialogue on how to best craft a more effective and progressive national security strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Now I've got the pleasure to introduce my close friend and collaborator, Dick Leone, the president of the Century Foundation. Before becoming president of the Century Foundation, Dick held posts as chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, state treasurer of New Jersey, and president of the New York Mercantile Exchange. He's probably – probably admits it, but one of the leading observers and leaders in New Jersey politics, a very close advisor to Governor Corzine. His writings have appeared in numerous publications including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and *Foreign Affairs*. He's a great leader of the Century Foundation. He's a tireless advocate for important public policy issues. He's a great friend of our Center's. We're lucky to work with him on an event such as this.

So please join me in welcoming Dick Leone, the president of the Century Foundation.

(Applause.)

MR. RICHARD LEONE: After that generous introduction, I should probably make clear that the Century Foundation doesn't really give away money; it just spends it. (Laughter.) I want to welcome you as well to this third in the series of conferences we began. With the first one not long after the invasion and occupation of Iraq, this capital then was in the grip of exuberant triumphalism. The air was thick with rhetoric about America as the new Rome. More and more people seemed to be adopting as their favorite a motto attributed to Caligula: "let them hate us so long as they fear us." Well, now things have changed. Then it was considered reckless or foolish or perhaps brave to criticize American foreign policy. Today, it's all too easy and it almost amounts to bullying. So I hope we move beyond that today to a conversation that takes us to where we want to go in the future.

The second conference was in New York City and focused on international organizations, particularly the UN. That, too, went against the grain because, as you know, we've lived through a period where working with international organizations has not been considered a high priority for American foreign policy. We commissioned a poll for the first conference by John Marttila Communications, and it discovered Americans were ahead of political leadership in their concern about the unilateralism, intervention, and breaking away from international organizations.

I want to share with you some numbers from a recent poll that was done by the Marttila organization for the American Security Project. It shows that Americans oppose intervention – unilateral intervention by a 74-to-21 percent margin. That’s a vast increase even over what we saw two years ago. But I think the most striking thing in this poll, and frankly it’s bothered me as much as any poll number I’ve seen in a long time, is that Americans were asked to rate the countries in the world – Americans were asked to rate the countries in the world that were most dangerous to the peace, and the United States came out third on that list. I can’t remember a time in my lifetime when such a thing would have been possible, even at the height of the Vietnam War, I think.

So we cannot rely on the public rallying behind anyone’s policy at this point. I think cynicism is deep and broad and justified, and we have a task ahead of us in the next couple of years – all of us – to find a way to reshape America’s perceptions and aspirations about our place in the world. We hope for a candid and constructive debate today about the future.

We encourage your vocal participation. There’s no single progressive orthodoxy, whether in the Middle East or on energy or defense or the global economy, and already the national campaigns of aspirants of both parties are trawling for new ideas that can become signature concepts. We hope that the issues you raise in your questions to the speakers and panels will help in identifying those ideas. We have a great lineup, and I know that you will move the discussion beyond the all too obvious critique of recent policy. The opportunity for renewal of American leadership is near. Many voices will contribute to that. We will hear some of them today. So don’t hold back, challenge what you think is stale, propose what you think is fresh, question what you think has failed, and advance what others might think is heresy. Promotion of democracy, after all, begins at home.

Thank you very much. I want to turn this over to Mort Halperin.

(Applause.)

MR. MORTON HALPERIN: Thank you very much. It is my high privilege and rare honor to introduce to you Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Secretary Albright I think knows as well as anyone that the notion that our ideals and our interests are in conflict with each other – that we need to turn from idealism to realism if we’re really going to protect our interests is utter and complete nonsense, that American interests include its ideals and that we are safer and stronger and more effective as a nation when we honor faithfully our ideals and use them to pursue our interests in the world.

I have just come back from Sarajevo and it reminded me of what I think is one of Secretary Albright’s greatest moments, one described both in her memoir and in Colin Powell’s memoir, in which the United States was facing the siege of Sarajevo, and Secretary Albright proposed that we use military force to stop the siege, to stop the genocide that was about to take place there, and Secretary Powell explained to her that we could not do it, that we didn’t have the right forces, that we didn’t have clear military objectives, he explained the Powell doctrine to her, and she replied, “If American military

force is not available to stop genocide in the center of Europe, then what is it for?" That was the right question then, it is the right question now, and as we all know, the answer is not Iraq. (Laughter.)

Secretary Albright also demonstrated that you deal with potential enemies not by calling them rogue states, but by engaging them, by seeking to understand their perception of the world and to see if one can come to an accommodation. And so she was willing and did travel to Pyongyang to deal with the North Koreans at a time when many people considered this naïve and irresponsible, and she gave a speech in Iran, which will eventually point the way to what we need to do to engage that country and to seek a solution of its problems.

She also demonstrated that we can help those struggling for democracy in the world, not with bullets and not with dictates about who has to win one election or another, but with a commitment of support to the people of countries struggling to establish democracy. And as democracy came to Indonesia and to Nigeria when she was secretary, she pointed the way to how we should work with people struggling to establish democracy. And so I think as we look forward, we need also to look back. We have a model in my view of how to protect the American interests in the world and pursue our ideals, and I'm delighted to present Secretary Albright to you.

(Applause.)

SEC. MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: Thank you. Thank you. It's wonderful to be with all of you this morning, and it's especially nice to be introduced by Mort, who was head of policy planning and was behind so many of the successful policies, and to be with so many good friends this morning. Thank you very much, Mort. I also want to thank my good friends, John Podesta and Dick Leone, and everyone else who has been involved in helping to put this conference together. You are the ones that really deserve all the applause.

Our assignment today is nothing less than to forge a new vision for American leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Fortunately, as John has described, the participants in our panels are brilliant, and by 5:00 everything that needs to be said will have been said, and all the next president has to do is to read the transcript. And if I know John Podesta, she probably will. (Laughter.) All right, to be politically correct, she or he probably will. For my part, I will try to set the stage and offer a few general principles to guide us.

The first of these principles is that we need to see the world as it is, not as we wish it might be. The sad fact is that these past seven years, America has lost power while others have gained it. When I was in the government, I gratified some people and annoyed others by referring to the United States as the indispensable nation. By that I meant not that other countries were dispensable, just that for hard problems to be solved, America had to play a role.

Today, we look at North Korea and conclude that we need China's help, and we look at Iran and know that China must acquiesce if sanctions ought to be viable, and we

look at Darfur and say that only Beijing can make Sudan toe the line, and we look at the weakness of our economy and decide that Chinese fiscal policies are to blame. We look at climate change and conclude nothing can be done without China and the table. And we look at our deficit and we know that we are paying our bills with Chinese cash.

We think of ourselves as the organizing principle in world affairs and yet this past year, China has convened a summit of African leaders, a summit of Asian leaders, a consortium of Central Asian powers – all without our participation. I don't mean to overstate this because China faces serious problems itself: its unemployment is too high, its air too dirty, its population aging, and its middle class sooner or later is going to demand political rights. But there can be no doubt that the equation between the United States and China has changed dramatically.

The average teenager in the world today is far more likely to know about what is happening at Guantanamo today than what happened 18 years in Tiananmen Square, and he or she is far more likely to associate the United States with Abu Ghraib than with Omaha Beach. In marketing terms, the American brand has been tarnished and that's one part of the reality we face in the world today.

A second is that the global institutions built by our greatest generation no longer work as they should. In fact, they remind me of a used car lot. For some vehicles, steering is the problem. They are always pulling too far to the left or to the right. Others are obsolete in their design. They were intended to go 30 miles an hour, but fell apart when we asked them to go 60. Some weren't maintained at all, while others were repaired by teams of mechanics who didn't see eye to eye about what was wrong, resulting, as for example, with the revised Human Rights Council in a fresh paintjob when a whole new engine was needed.

The good news is that we can always start over, and the bad news is that to do so we would have to appoint a committee. Consider for example the committees that have attempted over the past 15 years to reform the UN Security Council. We all agree that the council should be enlarged, but China doesn't want Japan to have a permanent seat, and Pakistan doesn't want India to have a permanent seat, and if Germany gets a permanent seat, then Italy wants one because, as I was reminded by the ambassador of Italy when we tried this, he said, you've got to remember, we lost the war, too, which is a rather peculiar campaign statement. (Laughter.)

The international banks pose another series of questions because there is so much private capital now, it's unclear whether the banks still have much of a role, and the nonproliferation regime is in trouble because of the loophole that allows a country to jump from legal civilian programs to an illegal military one without much of a technological leap. We could try to amend the Nonproliferation Treaty, except that would be a little bit like trying to rewrite a new American Constitution. We'd never get past the international equivalent of gay marriage.

A third element in the reality we face today is that Iraq has made everything harder. Americans have paid a high price for mistakes in Iraq, and we have not paid

equally. The war had left us with thousands of freshly-dug graves and many thousands of men and women maimed. President Bush has shared his anguish and prayed with loved ones, but he's constrained by his own false logic from describing the invasion for what it was: an assault against terror that strengthened terror, a demonstration of American power that exposed the limits of our power, a blow against extremism that served the agenda of Iran, and above all a grisly human tragedy. Operation Iraqi Freedom would better be described today as Operation Salvage Something. There are no good options and we have a new tsar, but no new strategy.

Our best hope is to contain and limit the damage, and I fear that will be job number one for the next president. He or she will benefit from being a new face. It may be short, but there will be a honeymoon. It will be vital to take advantage, because the new president's job will be extraordinarily difficult. We all want America to be respected again, but our people are discouraged because of Iraq and also because of what I call the Katrina effect. They will be reluctant to spend time and money solving problems overseas when we still have so many problems here at home.

In considering what to do, the new president will have to make judgments about what issues are the same and which are different and what problems must be dealt with immediately and which can be put off, and how to redefine America's role, and that process should begin with a look inward at how our government makes decisions, because we cannot afford, nor can the world afford, another Iraq.

We need to look as well at our alliance relationships, which have been allowed to weaken. The success or failure of NATO in Afghanistan is not a second tier issue because NATO's credibility and effectiveness are in doubt. The gravity that has held the international security system together for the past 60 years will be in doubt with no replacement in sight. We need to rebuild our friendships in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, for the world will not help us deal with dangers that threaten us if we are unconcerned about the dangers that threaten them, including the axis of evil, poverty, ignorance, and disease.

We need to reestablish the core American message to the world tracing back especially to FDR's four freedoms: that the management of world affairs cannot be treated as a zero-sum game. I don't know how many of you remember the song in the movie "Cabaret," when a young Nazi boy with blond hair and Aryan looks stands up and sings "Tomorrow Belongs to Me." America with its hair and skin of many colors must stand up for a different principle that tomorrow belongs not us or to them or to any variation of me. The future we seek is a victory for all. Think of how refreshing it would be if all the people in the Middle East and Iraq committed themselves to victory for all, and how much better the world would be if we each truly followed the teaching that is central to every system of ethics I know, and that is to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

The next president will face a world that seems transformed in every way imaginable. He or she will be required, in John Kennedy's phrase, "to think anew," but it's also essential that the next president be conscious of what has not changed, and that is

America's commitment to democracy. There are some who look at the electoral gains made recently by Islamists in such places as Iraq, Egypt, and the Palestinian Authority and conclude that democracy is likely to extinguish terror, as President Bush claims, than to ignite it. Only the naïve, so the realists say, can believe that Arabs are ready for democracy. I fear that as a result, that a new conventional wisdom will emerge that promoting democracy in the Middle East is a mistake. It is not. We should remember that the alternative is embracing governments that lack the blessings of their own people and that leads not to stability, but to its counterfeit, leaving us shackled to dictators, at odds with Arab democrats, distrusted by Arab populations, and unsure of ourselves.

America cannot rescue its reputation by throwing its ideals over the side, and at the same time we should keep our expectations in check. Just because the denial of freedom is bad doesn't mean the exercise of freedom will always be to our liking. Democracy is a form of government, not a ticket to some heavenly kingdom where extremism is vanquished and everyone agrees with us.

If Arab democracy develops, it will be to advance Arab aspirations based on Arab perceptions of history and justice. The right to vote and hold office is unlikely to soften Arab attitudes towards Israel or to end the potential for terror, just as it has not stopped terrorist cells from organizing in the West. Democracy should, however, create a broader and more open political debate within Arab countries, exposing myths to scrutiny and dangerous ideas to rebuttal. Though some may fear such an opening, Americans should welcome it, for if we fail to value free expression, we forget our own history.

Finally, just as our foreign policy cannot be unilateral, neither can it continue to be unidimensional. We cannot expect democracy to gain ground in the Middle East if it's slipping backward in Latin America, Africa, and the former Soviet Union. This is not just a question of geography; it's a question of victory or defeat in the battle of ideas.

For decades during the Cold War, the world was split between the free and unfree, and then the Berlin Wall came down and we all felt like dancing, but in recent years the outlines of a new and less concrete wall have become visible. A loosely organized bloc of governments has emerged with little in common except disdain for international norms and resistance to outside pressure. The list is lengthening. It includes not only China, but also such countries as Russia, Syria, Iran, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, and sad to say, Egypt. The leaders of these nations challenge the belief that human rights are universal and that abuses warrant the world's attention when and wherever they occur.

The Bush administration should be pushing back, but instead has made matters worse by treating the whole concept of international norms as a conspiracy to tie America down. Over the past six years, the United States has undermined or ignored global standards on the use of force, the treatment of prisoners, the care of the environment, money laundering, biological weapons, and missile defense, while also trying to sabotage the International Criminal Court. The administration opposes restrictions on American actions because it sees our country as so strong that we gain no benefit from legal protections, but that's not the issue. If we do not recognize international standards, others

will ignore them as well. The result will be a world governed not by the rule of law, but by no rules at all.

Hopefully, the next president will restore a balance so that America is perceived once again as neither timid nor arrogant, but rather confident. If voters choose wisely, our leaders will take actions that are neither isolationist nor imperial, guiding U.S. policy back to where it belongs: in the moderate mainstream. Some commentators may scoff at this and associate moderation with weakness or lack of conviction. I say let them, because this morning I would like to issue a clarion call for militant moderation. I want to see moderates on the march, moderates with swagger, moderates with courage to stand up and fight for what they believe. It can be done because it has been done.

Consider Harry Truman. Truman never asked for a permission slip to defend America, but neither did he ever fail to associate the United States with the purposes of the United Nations Charter, the interests of our allies, and the goal of helping others. He had the strength to act decisively, but also the wisdom to lead in a way that attracted international support. He worked tirelessly to strengthen global institutions and law, but reserved the option for independent action. He saw America as exceptional not because it was exempt from the rules demanded of others, but because it was determined to create a world in which rules had real meaning. And he was resolute in defining America not in terms of its possessions, but rather its ideals.

We believe that all men have a right to equal justice under law and equal opportunity to share in the common good, he said. We believe that all men have a right to freedom and thought and expression, and we believe that all men are created equal because they are created in the image of God. Truman's words, with a little updating as to gender, still speak to us today – a new day in an age-old struggle between hope and fear on the Earth.

Thank you all very, very much.

(Applause.)

MR. BOYER: Thank you, Secretary Albright, for those enlightening remarks.

Please remain in your seats for the next two minutes while we undergo a very quick set change. Thank you.

(END)